DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 196 210 EC 131 359

AUTHOR Cronk, Bili
TITLE Vocational Skills Taught Through Creative Arts.
PUB DATE Apr 80
NOTE 10p.: Paper presented at the Annual International Convention of The Council for Exceptional Children (58th, Philadelphia, PA, April, 1980, Session T-25).

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Creative Art: Elementary Education; *Job Skills; Learning Activities; *Moderate Mental Retardation; *Vocational Education

ABSTRACT

The author describes how vocational skills were taught in a class of intermediate trainable mentally retarded students (10 to 15 years old) and how the skills to be learned were integrated with creative art activity. The terms career education, prevocational education, vocational education, and special education are defined. It is pointed out that the basic elements of the arts (awareness, exploration, initiative, decision making, development of physical and social skills) lead to learning of all kinds. Listed among activities are making jewelry boxes cut of wooden cigar boxes, constructing piggy banks from plastic tubs, and utilizing dramatic play to pretend to cook and eat a meal. (SBH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED196210

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

VOCATIONAL SKILLS TAUGHT THROUGH CREATIVE ARTS

by

Mili Cronk

13116 Clearwood Avenue
La Mirada, CA 90638

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Mili Cronk

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

EC131359

Mili Cronk, 13116 Clearwood Ave., La Mirada, CA 90638 (213) 921-1638

Cronk
T25

VOCATIONAL SKILLS TAUGHT THROUGH CREATIVE ARTS

In order to explore this subject, we should understand what is meant by "vocational Skills" and what is meant by "creative arts".

Vocational skills ar those skills learned through Career Education and Vocational Education, areas of education that have been receiving a great deal of attention lately from individuals and organizations concerned with Special Education.

The following definitions have been derived from the Vocational Education Administrative Policies Manual for Handicapped Students and from Career Education for Exceptional Individuals: A Self-Instructional Manual, both published by the Council for Exceptional Children.

Career Education provides the opportunity for children to learn, in the least restrictive environment possible, the academic, daily living, personal, social and occupational knowledge and skills necessary for attaining their highest levels of personal, social and economic fulfillment . Career education should permeate all subject matter and educational settings for exceptional students from early childhood through the post-secondary years to be effective.

Pre-vocational education is instruction needed as a pre-requisite to vocational education, such as reading and writing, knowledge of commonly used tools, utensils and processes; familiarity with a broad range of occupations for which special skills are required; knowledge of the nature and extent of vocational limitations caused by a handicap and the use of prosthetic devices. Pre-vocational education assists an individual to acquire those basic skills, work attitudes and behavioral patterns needed to progress toward a specific occupational goal.

Vocational education means organized educational programs which are directly related to the preparation of individuals for paid or unpaid employment

or for additional preparation for a career requiring other than a baccalaureate or advanced degree. Vocational education includes industrial arts and consumer and homemaking education programs, necessary skills for a specific occupation and in time, job placement.

The definaition of Special Education includes vocational education if it consists of specially designed instruction, at no cost to the parents,to meet the unique needs of a handicapped child. Special vocational education is designed for handicapped persons whose greater degree of impairment precludes integration into a regular vocational education program. Instruction may be provided in a class limited to individuals with a specific primary disability - for example, mental retardation, severe emotional disturbance, or the class may serve a heterogeneous group of students with special needs. Job entry skills may include, but not be limited to:

1. Training in the use of hand tools, and courses in industrial arts.
2. Courses in home economics including care of materials, utensils and facilities.
3. A simulated workshop, providing an environment for training in repetitive tasks.
4. Work experience programs.

Drama, dance, mime, music, drawing, painting and clay activities are forms of art that many teachers feel are play or recreational activities. They fail to realize that a child learns about life, about himself and about others most effectively and naturally through play, where a child involves his whole self, emotionally, physically, intellectually, and socially in a spontaneous exploration of his world. Art, music, dance and drama are disciplines which consider play essential to the child's development. The basic elements of the arts - awareness, exploration, initiative, decision-making development of physical and social skills, leads to learning of all kinds. As the child engages in arts activities he expresses his dreams, desires, fears and frustrations, and learns to cope with and communicate these feel-

ings. As he departs a little from the usual ways of expressing art by modifying and improving on them he becomes creative. His creativity gives a feeling of satisfaction and may eliminate a sense of frustration, thus providing him with a basic positive attitude about himself and his work.

Art provides a handicapped child with opportunities to function as independently as possible. Music, drama, dance and art activities demand self-control, concentration, cooperation, and task completion. Socialization takes place through group participation. The handicapped child's need for self-expression, for pleasure, and for dealing with disappointments, of which he has many, are great. He deserves the most intensive, extensive, creative arts activities that can be provided. Unfortunately, only 12 percent of the extimated 8 million handicapped children in the nation receive any arts program.

I would like to show you now how vocational skills were taught in my class room of Intermediate TMR students (ages 10-15) and how the skills to be learned were integrated with creative art activity.

1. In Industrial Arts the children learned to use a saw.
2. Hammer and nails.
3. A chisel for gouging out chunks of wood.
4. They learned to assist each other when centering a drill, and to
5. Use a file to round off edges.
6. Sandpaper was used to rub off rust
7. before painting these chair frames with aluminum paint..
8. A creative use of color is shown in the way each child painted his orange crate.
9. These heavy wooden crates were used for years in the classroom in many different ways.
10. Here they form a back-ground for the many airplanes
11. Airplanes and helicopters
12. Sail boats and a submarine
13. and boats, planes and trucks made by the children.

14. This boy created his own idea of a delivery truck.

15. Tempera paint was used as a first coat, then lacquer was applied.

16. An important part of every job is cleaning up. The lacquer is cleaned out of the brush with lacquer thinner. We also used a clear varnish which could be removed with mineral spirits. The children learned to discriminate between lacquer and varnish, and to use the proper thinner with each. They also learned to use water only with tempera paints.

17. These are napkin holders which have been glued as well as nailed together, with the plastic flowers applied by gluing.

18. We had a large supply of wooden cigar boxes which the children painted and lacquered.

19. They chose their own colors and decorations.

20. They glued felt into the tops and bottoms of their "jewelry boxes"

21. The individuality and creativity of each child is distinctive.

22. Another project was the making of piggy banks from chlorox jugs.

23. Cans wrapped with yarn or decorated with macaroni also gives the children an opportunity to express their creativity.

24. These cans were decorated with cord and cooking crystals - a hobby crafts product, then lined with felt.

25. Children should explore many media and learn a number of techniques for using them. Here we used spackle mixed in a metal lid and smoothed flat with an ice cream stick

26. then adding cooking crystals and glitter to make a hot pad or trivet.

27. Another tool of great importance is a pair of scissors.

28. Practice in cutting with scissors led to the creation of a long bulletin board

29. Dittoes were colored and then the children cut out the figures

29. and placed them on a background with trees made by them

30. and a farm created by one of the students, with a cherry orchard made by all the students..

31. Cutting with scissors provided the basic half circle

32. that was rolled to form a cone.

33. This cone was fitted into a plastic coffee can lid which gave it stability.

34. A flour and salt dough was rolled into coils and attached to the cone.

35. Macaroni of all shapes was pressed into the dough. Altho the children worked independently there was a feeling of group operation. We called this our "assembly line". Work could be left to be worked on later

by covering it with a bread wrapper. This project was scheduled daily for two weeks just before the Christmas holidays.

36. The Christmas trees were baked at low heat in the oven, first removing the plastic lid,

37. reset into the lid and spray painted. Each child took his best product home.

38. 49 Christmas trees were sold one year and the money used to buy table games and story books for the classroom..

39. In the area of home-making, the children learned to make wall decorations using liquid embroidery.

40. These were entered in a Tri-Chem show at the Womens Club where they won ribbons.

41. This was not a difficult task for about half of the class, and an enjoyable one.

42. Holidays always gave opportunities for creative arts and vocational skills to be used.

43. Faces are drawn on the pumpkin with a felt pen

44. Then eyes, nose and mouth cut out with another essential tool used both in industrial arts and in home making.

45. A stack of Jack-o-Lanterns individually created..

46. Assembly line techniques were used to make these packets containing candy

47. in a folded tag-board square covered with net, and tied with a ribbon.

48. Each student made a marshmallow, life-saver, gum-drop candy apple Santa Claus for himself, to take home at Christmas..

49. A basket made from egg cartons gave this young man a chance to learn to lace

50. And to tie shoelaces in a unique creative way.

51. The completed product after many, many periods of work.

52. Other children show their baskets to take home..

53. Clay activities are great for venting frustrations

54. or as a time to work together in a group, creating individual art works.

55. Flowers, an elephant and a pig, mushrooms and a tree stump, and a plaque of 3 fishes were made of clay.

56. These children all made "flower-dishes" for table decorations. Dowels were used to make the stems.

57. But these two lads made a virtual Noah's ark of animals

58. especially this young artist who is displaying his drawings as well as his clay work, which as you might note covers the entire evolutionary scale of animals.

59. These two also provided a challenge for the teacher to devise a way for them to build these Jack-o-Lanterns. They did them by placing coils around a bowl covered with paper towels and blending them together to make one half. This was dumped into a nest of newspaper crumpled to line a larger bowl. A second half was built the same way and dumped. After these halves became leather hard, another coil was made and used to fit the two halves together. The tops were cut off, the insides finished by smoothing clay into the crack between the coils. Section lines were pressed into the clay; eyes, nose and mouth cut out, leaving teeth to hold the mouth open, and a stem was added to the top..

60. Dramatic play - pretending to cook one's own dinner

61. and pretending to eat it gave the children an opportunity to socialize.

62. These pretend activities led to doing the real thing - actually making something to eat, such as an egg salad sandwich,

63. then washing and drying the dishes,

64. sweeping the floor,

65. or mopping it, if necessary.

66. Home making chores gave the children a chance to pretend they were doing the family wash. One of the girls became quite bossy as they were sorting the clothes. "Sheesh," exclaimed one of the boys. "I'd hate to be your wife!"

67. They learned how to measure the detergent

68. and put it in.

69. And how to measure and put in water softener or bleach when needed..

70. Individual projects initiated by a student were always encouraged. The boy in the tall hat did many creative things such as this hat,

71. And this Indian headdress and peace pipe made from a broken paint bottle and a dowel.

72. He found a picture of an Indian headdress in this book about Indians.

73. And started to make one by first making the bonnet.

74. He attached red paper and dowels to the bonnet, then cut them apart to make feathers.

75. He glued more feathers onto the dowels and trimmed them to shape them.

76. Then spread them apart and spaced them with yarn. From here on he needed considerable help from the teacher.

77. More yarn and beads were attached. Here he is with the completed headdress, beak and all.

78. Another boy needed to make a clown costume. He was shown how to lay out the pattern on the material, but he cut it out and pinned it together himself.

79. He basted it with long stitches.

80. The teacher sewed it on the machine.

81. And he added circles he cut from mystic tape, so that it would have the "pokey-dots" he wanted.

82. Music is another creative art that leads to the learning of social and vocational skills. The boy said, "I'm bursting with song!" but not a sound came out.

83. Mime is another creative art, even when it results in a child showing how his dog laps up water.

84. Song - in this case pantomime to records because the boy was almost mute,

85. and dance are all very important creative arts.

86. Mix these together, plan and practice a program, and the class is ready to take part at an Assembly. For one Assembly, our class sang "Puff the Magic Dragon." This boy drew the dragon

87. And ended exactly as the class finished.

88. In another number, the children took turns dressing the Principal as Aiken Drum

89. the man who lived in the moon - with shoes made of hot dogs!

90. As the children's vocational skills increased, we were able to produce 50 minute Pantomime shows for Assemblies

91. with numbers such as "Doing the Hand Jive" (each boy made his own hat)

92. and "Little Deuce Coupe" for which the students constructed and painted the car.

93. They made all the Beatles instruments and appeared as the final act in the show. Many guitars were made by several students. Each one took one home that he had made, but a complete set remained at school.

94. For another Pantomime show, the students constructed and painted scenery for the numbers "Wabash Cannon Ball"

95. "King of the Road"

96. "Five hundred miles from Home"

97. And "Queen of the House."

98. This flower stand and all the flowers were made by students who also painted the boxes.

99. The crepe paper dresses were also made, with some help, by the girls.

100. And as the piece de resistance, the Beatles appeared again with their instruments, in more sophisticated outfits.

Shortly after this performance, this group appeared on John Marshall's "Fun for All" TV show on KTLA Los Angeles as an entry in their search for Beatles impersonators. They lip-synced "She Loves You."

Most of the students you have seen on the screen have graduated from the TMR High School and are now successfully employed in a number of Sheltered Workshops. Several of the girls went to work in sheltered workshops but for various reasons are now working in their own homes as mother's helpers. One boy is working for McDonalds; another helps in a Thrift store; the most successful graduate is now working as an apprentice in a garage learning motor tune-up and brake relining.

I have tried to show that Career education, Pre-vocational education, and special vocational education are not limited to Junior high or High Schools. Training in vocational skills should begin at the Primary level, be enhanced throughout the Intermediate years, so that by the time the student arrives in High School he will have the basic skills needed to become successful in his life work. These skills can be taught successfully through a continuous program of creative arts.